



Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., holds a news conference on the day after violent protesters loyal to President Donald Trump stormed the U.S. Congress, at the Capitol in Washington, Thursday, Jan. 7, 2021.

Associated Press

Pelosi, Democrats lay plans for swift Trump impeachment

By LISA MASCARO, MARY CLARE JALONICK and ZEKE MILLER

WASHINGTON (AP) — Democrats laid plans Friday for impeaching President Donald Trump, even as he's headed out of the White

House, and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said she had spoken to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff about preventing an "unhinged" Trump from ordering a nuclear strike in his final days.

Pelosi and the Democrats are considering swift impeachment — beginning Monday — after the deadly siege of the U.S. Capitol by a pro-Trump mob that shocked the nation and the world.

"We must take action," Pelosi declared on a private conference call with Democrats.

She said she had also spoken with Gen. Mark Milley "to discuss available precautions for preventing an

unstable president from initiating military hostilities or accessing the launch codes" for nuclear war.

She said Milley assured her longstanding safeguards are in place.

Continued on next page

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The president has sole authority to order the launch of a nuclear weapon, but a military commander could refuse the order if it were determined to be illegal. Trump has not publicly made such threats, but some lawmakers are sounding alarms that he could do great damage on military or other issues on his way out.

The attack on the Capitol left five dead, including a protester and a police officer. Trump is to leave office Jan. 20 when Democrat Joe Biden is sworn in, and he has said he will not attend the inauguration.

"This unhinged president could not be more dangerous," Pelosi said of the current situation.

If Trump were to be impeached by the House and convicted by the Senate, he might also be prevented from running again for the presidency in 2024 or ever holding public office again. He would be only the president twice impeached. A person granted anonymity to discuss the private call said Pelosi also discussed other ways Trump might be forced to resign.

Biden, meanwhile, said he is focused on his job as he prepares to take office. Asked about impeachment, he said, "That's a decision for the Congress to make."

Conviction in the Republican Senate at this late date would seem unlikely, though in a sign of Trump's shattering of the party many Republicans were silent on the issue.

One Trump ally, Republican Minority Leader Rep. Kevin McCarthy of California,



Trump supporters participate in a rally Wednesday, Jan. 6, 2021 in Washington.

Associated Press

said "impeaching the President with just 12 days left in his term will only divide our country more."

McCarthy said he has reached out to Biden and plans to speak with the Democratic president-elect about working together to "lower the temperature."

The final days of Trump's presidency are spinning toward a chaotic end as he holes up at the White House, abandoned by many aides, leading Republicans and Cabinet members. He was tweeting again after his Twitter account was reinstated, reverting to an aggressive statement that his supporters must not be "disrespected" after he sent out a calmer Thursday video decrying the violence.

Calls are mounting for legal action following the Capitol attack, in which one protester was shot to death by Capitol police and Capitol police officer Brian

Sicknick died. Three other people died from "medical emergencies" during the demonstration.

Strong criticism of Trump, who urged the protesters to march to the Capitol, continued unabated.

"Every day that he remains in office, he is a danger to the Republic," said Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Calif.

Schiff, who led Trump's impeachment in 2019, said in a statement that Trump "lit the fuse which exploded on Wednesday at the Capitol."

Articles of impeachment are expected to be introduced on Monday, with a House vote as soon as Wednesday, according to two people familiar with the planning and granted anonymity to discuss it.

A draft of the impeachment resolution charges Trump with abuse of power, saying he "willfully made statements that encouraged — and foreseeably resulted in — imminent law-

less action at the Capitol."

On her call with colleagues, Pelosi grew emotional talking about Wednesday's events. She told the lawmakers they had a choice to make on impeachment, according to a person on the call who was granted anonymity to discuss it.

Pelosi and Democratic Senate leader Chuck Schumer have called on Vice President Mike Pence and the Cabinet to invoke the 25th Amendment to force Trump from office. It's a process for removing the president and installing the vice president to take over.

But action by Pence or the Cabinet now appears unlikely, especially after two top officials, Education Secretary Betsy DeVos and Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao suddenly resigned in the aftermath of the violence at the Capitol and would no longer be in the Cabinet to make such a case.

Trump had encouraged

loyalists at a rally Wednesday at the White House to march on the Capitol where Congress was certifying the Electoral College tally of Biden's election.

Rep. James Clyburn, the No. 3 House Democrat, told CNN: "Everyone knows that this president is deranged." One leading Republican critic of Trump, Sen. Ben Sasse of Nebraska, said he will "definitely consider" impeachment.

Schumer said he and Pelosi tried to call Pence early Thursday to discuss the 25th Amendment option but were unable to connect with him.

Most Democrats, and many Republicans, put the blame squarely on Trump after swarms of protesters bearing Trump flags and clothing broke into the Capitol and caused destruction and evacuations. The House impeached Trump in 2019, but the Republican-led Senate acquitted him in early 2020.

Three Democrats on the House Judiciary Committee began Thursday to circulate articles of impeachment drafted by Reps. David Cicilline of Rhode Island, Jamie Raskin of Maryland and Ted Lieu of California. During a new conference Thursday, Pelosi challenged several Cabinet members by name, including Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin.

"Do they stand by these actions?" Pelosi asked. "Are they ready to say that for the next 13 days this dangerous man can do further harm to our country?"

Pence has not publicly addressed the possibility of invoking the 25th Amendment. □

Dominion sues Trump lawyer Sidney Powell for defamation

WASHINGTON (AP) — Dominion Voting Systems filed a defamation lawsuit against lawyer Sidney Powell on Friday, seeking at least \$1.3 billion for Powell's "wild accusations" that the company rigged the presidential election for Joe Biden.

"Dominion brings this action to set the record straight," the company said in the suit filed in federal court in

Washington.

Powell has for weeks claimed without evidence that the election technology vendor, whose vote-counting equipment was used in several states, was part of a scheme to steal the election from President Donald Trump.

Powell has been representing Trump in a series of unsuccessful lawsuits filed to contest the election out-

come.

She has claimed that the company was created in Venezuela to rig elections for the late leader Hugo Chavez and that it has the ability to switch votes.

There was no widespread fraud in the election, which a range of election officials across the country including Trump's former attorney general, William Barr, have confirmed. Republican

governors in Arizona and Georgia, key battleground states crucial to Biden's victory, also vouched for the integrity of the elections in their states. Nearly all the legal challenges from Trump and his allies have been dismissed by judges, including two tossed by the Supreme Court, which includes three Trump-nominated justices.

The company said there

"there are mountains of direct evidence that conclusively disprove Powell's vote manipulation claims against Dominion — namely, the millions of paper ballots that were audited and recounted by bipartisan officials and volunteers in Georgia and other swing states, which confirmed that Dominion accurately counted votes on paper ballots." □

Effort in Arkansas to enact hate crimes law in jeopardy

By **ANDREW DeMILLO**

Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (AP) — A push to finally enact a hate crimes law in Arkansas, a state with a history of white supremacists, appeared to have all the elements for success: a popular Republican governor who made it a priority, major corporations endorsing the idea and support from communities where hate groups have flourished.

But the chance to end Arkansas' distinction as one of only three states without such a law is in jeopardy even before lawmakers return to the Capitol. Conservatives have moved to defeat the bill in the majority-GOP Legislature, though similar measures have passed in other red states. Georgia in June became the latest to enact a bill, leaving Arkansas, South Carolina and Wyoming as the remaining outliers.

The bill's dimming prospects threaten a legislative priority for Gov. Asa Hutchinson, who as a U.S. attorney prosecuted racist militia members but without a hate crimes law's specific penalties.

If victims are targeted because of their race, ethnicity or sexual orientation, "we have to express as a society that should not be tolerated and that we should have enhanced penalties for that," Hutchinson told The Associated Press this week.

The proposal in Arkansas would impose up to 20% additional jail time or fines for targeting someone because of several factors, including race, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity. Prosecutors would have to prove the victim's attributes was a substantial factor in the crime being committed.

Similar proposals have stalled over the years, but the idea gained new momentum after Hutchinson made it a personal cause and cited the threat of mass shootings, including one at a Texas Walmart in 2019 that federal authorities prosecuted as a hate crime.

Hate groups have long claimed Arkansas as a haven. Dozens of members of the New Aryan Empire, a white supremacist group that prosecutors said engaged in drug trafficking and witness intimidation, were indicted on federal charges in the state last year.

In the 1980s, as a U.S. attorney, Hutchinson put on a bulletproof vest to negotiate the end of a standoff with a white supremacist group in the Ozark Mountains. Hutchinson noted that the case was before a federal hate crimes statute was in place.

"I got a 20-year sentence for racketeering against the leader of this group. I'd love to have had 25 years in there with a good en-



Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson speaks in his office at the state Capitol in Little Rock, Ark. on Monday, Jan. 4, 2021.

Associated Press

hancement for hate crime," he said.

The bill has strong support from Democrats, but conservatives have pressed familiar objections to includ-

ing LGBT protections.

"Unfortunately, this law creates more inequality by favoring special categories of people based on their sexual orientation, gender

identity, and other characteristics," Jerry Cox, executive director of the Family Council, said last year.

Hutchinson and outgoing Senate President Jim Hendren have refused to remove sexual orientation or gender identity as categories under the bill. The bill has also faced a wider complaint from critics who say the enhanced penalties single out certain groups.

"If you're going to do it for one group of people, why wouldn't you do it for another?" said incoming Senate President Jimmy Hickey, who said he doesn't believe the bill can pass.

The potential for hate crimes laws getting approved is mixed in the other remaining states. □



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State lawmaker charged after entering Capitol with rioters

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP) —

A West Virginia state lawmaker has been charged with entering a restricted area of the U.S. Capitol after he livestreamed himself rushing into the building with a mob of President Donald Trump's supporters. Ken Kohl, a top deputy federal prosecutor in Washington, announced the charge against Republican state Del. Derrick Evans on a call in which he presented dozens of new charges against members of the crowd that violently stormed the Capitol on Wednesday.

His lawyer, John Bryan, said he hadn't seen the complaint against Evans and couldn't comment. He did not say if Evans had been taken into custody, but television station WSAZ posted a video on Twitter showing FBI agents escorting the handcuffed lawmaker from a home.

"He's a fine man. And thank you, Mr. Trump, for inviting a riot at the White House," a woman identifying herself as Evans' grandmother told station reporters as her grandson was being taken



West Virginia House of Delegates member Derrick Evans, left, is given the oath of office Dec. 14, 2020, in the House chamber at the state Capitol in Charleston, W.Va.

Associated Press

into custody.

Legislators from at least seven other states traveled to Washington, D.C., to back Trump and demonstrate against the counting of electoral votes confirming Democrat Joe Biden's victory. It's unknown if any other elected official joined the attack on the Capitol. In Tennessee, legislation was introduced Friday that

would require the state authorities to investigate any Tennessean participating in Wednesday's events.

The proposal from Democratic state Rep. London Lamar specifically clarifies that any "seditious and treasonous acts" that took place at the U.S. Capitol by an elected official would constitute grounds for immediate removal.

The legislation comes days after Republican state Rep. Terri Lynn Weaver described Wednesday night as "epic" after attending the demonstrations. It's unclear if Weaver entered the Capitol.

A growing number of Republicans and Democrats said they want to expel Evans from the legislature if he does not resign. Bryan

said late Thursday that the delegate did not commit a crime and doesn't plan to resign.

No one in the office of West Virginia Republican House leader Roger Hanshaw responded to an email requesting comment.

In his now-deleted video, widely shared online, Evans is clamoring inside a jam-packed Capitol building doorway, trying with others to push his way inside. He hollers along with other Trump loyalists and fist-bumps a law enforcement officer who let them in.

Evans' lawyer has said he was acting as an amateur journalist recording the day's events and that he was not involved in violence. After pushing into the building, video shows Evans milling around the Capitol Rotunda, where historic paintings depict the republic's founding, and imploring others to not vandalize artwork and busts. Some of the pieces were later vandalized.

"Our house!" Evans yells inside Capitol halls. "I don't know where we're going. I'm following the crowd." □

Woman who wrongly accused Black teen is arrested, apologizes



This booking photo provided by Ventura County Sheriff's Office in California shows Miya Ponsetto.

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A woman who wrongly accused a Black teenager of stealing her phone and tackled him while being filmed at a New York City hotel apologized but defended her actions in a television interview conducted before she was arrested in California.

"I consider myself to be super sweet," Miya Ponsetto, 22, said in a "CBS This Morning" interview that aired Friday. "I don't feel that that is who I am as a person. I don't feel like this one mistake does define me," she said. "But I do sincerely from the bottom of my heart apologize that if I made the son feel as if I assaulted him or if I hurt his feelings or the father's feelings."

The interview was conducted Thursday afternoon, hours before Ponsetto was jailed in Ventura County. A spokesperson for the sheriff's office there said it

wasn't immediately clear what charges she faced. The office earlier said she might be charged with resisting arrest.

The New York Police Department flew detectives to California earlier Thursday with a warrant for Ponsetto's arrest. The trip followed days of intense media coverage of the fracas at the hotel and demands by the teen's family and activists that she face criminal charges. Ponsetto's lawyer, Sharen Ghatan, said in an interview before the arrest that her client was "emotionally unwell" and remorseful for her Dec. 26 conflict with 14-year-old Keyon Harrold Jr. at Manhattan's Arlo Hotel. Ghatan said the encounter was not racially motivated.

The teen's father, jazz trumpeter Keyon Harrold, recorded the confrontation and put the video online.

In his video, an agitated woman demands the teenager's phone, claiming he stole it. A hotel manager tries to intervene. Keyon Harrold tells the woman to leave his son alone. Ghatan confirmed Ponsetto is the woman in the video.

Security video later released by the NYPD shows Ponsetto frantically grabbing at the teenager as he tried to get away from her through the hotel's front door. She clutches him from behind, and both tumble to the ground.

Ponsetto's missing phone had actually been left in an Uber and was returned by the driver shortly afterward, Keyon Harrold has said.

In the CBS interview, Ponsetto said she had been approaching people exiting the hotel, thinking she was doing her part as a hotel manager reviewed video footage. □

WHO: Rich nations, vaccine firms should stop bilateral deals

GENEVA (AP) — The World Health Organization chief appealed on Friday to makers of COVID-19 vaccines and the wealthier countries buying them to "stop making bilateral deals," saying they hurt a U.N.-backed effort to widen access to the jabs.

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said 42 countries are now rolling out such vaccines, mostly high-income and a few middle-income countries. He called on countries that have more jabs than they need to make some available to the COVAX Facility — the U.N.-backed project to get vaccines deployed widely.

"Now, we are also seeing both high- and middle-income countries that are part of COVAX making additional bilateral deals," he told reporters in Geneva. "This potentially bumps up the price for everyone and means high-risk people in the poorest and most marginalized countries don't get the vaccine."

"I urge countries and manufacturers to stop making bilateral deals at the expense of COVAX," said Tedros, the WHO director-general.

Tedros also urged manufacturers to make the data about their vaccines avail-



In this Thursday, June 25, 2020 file photo, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director General of the World Health Organization (WHO), attends a press conference, at the (WHO) headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.

Associated Press

able, which is needed for the U.N. health agency to be able to provide "emergency use listings" that can expedite their deployment. The lack of such data "blocks the whole system of procurement and delivery," he said.

WHO officials, who generally shun finger-pointing at specific countries and companies that they need to work with, did not specify which ones need to do

more to help broaden access to vaccines.

But Canada, for example, is known to have far greater access to vaccines that its population needs. And partners Pfizer and BioNTech, which make the first vaccine that received emergency use approval from the WHO and countries like the U.S. and Britain, have not reached a deal to take part in the COVAX Facility.

Dr. Bruce Aylward, a special adviser to the WHO chief, said 50% of high-income countries are deploying vaccines — and "zero percent" of poor countries are. "That is not equitable access," he said.

Sharon Castillo, a Pfizer spokeswoman, said her company and BioNTech "are firmly committed to equitable and affordable access" to their vaccine for people around the world.

"As it relates to COVAX, we support its goal to supply two billion COVID-19 vaccine doses in 2021 to countries around the world, with half of those going to (low- and middle-income countries)" she said. "We are in active negotiations with COVAX to help it reach this goal and hope to finalize an agreement very soon."

The WHO appeals come as the world has faced high case counts in recent weeks — roughly 4 million new confirmed infections per week, said WHO emergencies chief Dr. Michael Ryan.

Tedros said some of the highest numbers of deaths recorded at any point in the pandemic have turned up in recent days, and faulted a lack of compliance with recommendations of health authorities.

The WHO also said a team of experts who had originally expected to arrive in China this week to look into the origins of the pandemic had not yet arrived, saying that now, "we expect to fix the travel dates next week." On Tuesday, Tedros said he was "very disappointed" that Chinese officials had not finalized the needed permissions for the team's arrival in China. □

Migrants in burnt Bosnia camp wait for new tents in blizzard

By **KEMAL SOFTIC**
Associated Press

BIHAC, Bosnia-Herzegovina (AP) — Bosnian authorities have started moving some migrants and refugees stuck at a burnt out camp into heated tents, a U.N. migration official said Friday, as fresh snow and freezing weather added to the misery of people stranded in the Balkan country while trying to reach Western Europe.

Hundreds of Lipa camp residents tried to warm up around fires during a blizzard at the the facility in northwest Bosnia as authorities rushed to equip some 20 new tents meant to accommodate them. A Dec. 23 fire gutted most of the camp.

The head of the Interna-

tional Organization for Migration in Bosnia, Peter Van der Auweraert, said on Twitter later Friday that some of the migrants would get sheltered Friday and the rest on Saturday.

Some of the people at the destroyed camp didn't wear socks or jackets as they waited to receive food parcels from aid groups.

"Many days go and I didn't take a shower, and we don't have electricity," said Mohammad Afsal, from Pakistan.

"Please stand with us and help us. We are in a very, very bad condition!"

Bosnia has faced international criticism for leaving some 1,000 people without shelter after the fire engulfed the squalid Lipa camp, which is located

near the border with European Union member Croatia.

Authorities first said they would move the camp residents to another location, but the transfer plan was called off after local citizens organized protests. Bosnia's armed forces put up the new tents last week, but the tents apparently had not been made fully ready to occupy by the time the weather worsened on Friday. People were staying in small, unheated tents and containers as snow fell and trying to stay dry under make-shift nylon covers.

"It's too cold," Mohammad Jasar, also from Pakistan, said. "We have too much trouble here in Lipa camp." There are thousands of mi-



Migrants cook inside a makeshift shelter at the Lipa camp, outside Bihac, Bosnia, Friday, Jan. 8, 2021.

Associated Press

grants in Bosnia who are trying to reach Western Europe. They are mostly concentrated in the northwest of the Balkan country, in the hope of crossing illegally into neighboring Croa-

tia, from where it would be easier to travel on to other EU member countries. Migrants have complained they often face pushbacks and violence at the hands of Croatia's police. □

Seoul court orders Japan to compensate 12 Korean sex slaves

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)

— A South Korean court on Friday ordered Japan to financially compensate 12 South Korean women forced to work as sex slaves for Japanese troops during World War II, a landmark ruling that's set to rekindle animosities between the Asian neighbors.

Japan immediately protested the ruling, maintaining that all wartime compensation issues were resolved under a 1965 treaty that restored their diplomatic ties. The Seoul Central District Court ruled the Japanese government must give 100 million won (\$91,360) each to the 12 aging women who filed the lawsuits in 2013 for their wartime sexual slavery.

The court said Japan's mobilization of these women as sexual slaves was "a crime against humanity." It said it happened when Japan "illegally occupied" the Korean Peninsula from 1910-45, and its sovereign immunity cannot shield it from lawsuits in South Korea.

The court said the women were the victims of "harsh sexual activities" by Japa-



Portraits of late former South Korean comfort women are displayed near the Japanese Embassy in Seoul, South Korea, Friday, Jan. 8, 2021.

Associated Press

nese soldiers who caused them bodily harm, venereal diseases and unwanted pregnancies and left "big mental scars" in the women's lives.

The proceedings in the case had been delayed as Japan refused to receive legal documents. Seven of the 12 women died while waiting for the ruling.

Another 20 women, some

already diseased and represented by their surviving relatives, filed a separate suit against Japan, and that ruling is expected next week.

The women were among tens of thousands across occupied Asia and the Pacific who were sent to front-line Japanese military brothels. About 240 South Korean women came for-

ward and registered with the government as victims of sexual slavery, but only 16 of them, all in their 80s and 90s, are still alive.

Observers say it's unlikely for Japan to abide by the South Korean court ruling. A support group for women forced to work as sex slaves said it may take legal steps to seize Japanese government assets in South Korea

if Japan refuses to compensate victims.

Japan's Foreign Ministry said in a statement that Vice Foreign Minister Takeo Akiba had summoned South Korean Ambassador Nam Gwan-pyo to register Tokyo's protest of the ruling. Chief Cabinet Secretary Katsunobu Kato also called the ruling "extremely regrettable," saying "the Japanese government cannot accept this by any means." South Korea's Foreign Ministry said later Friday it respects the ruling and will strive to restore the dignity of the women. It said it will examine the verdict's possible effects on ties with Japan and make efforts to maintain "future-oriented" cooperation with Tokyo.

Seoul and Tokyo, both key U.S. allies, are closely linked to each other economically and culturally. But their historical and territorial disputes stemming from Japan's colonial occupation have often complicated Washington's efforts to strengthen trilateral cooperation to deal with North Korea's nuclear threat and China's growing influence in the region. □

U.S. sanctions prominent Iraqi politician over rights abuses



Supporters of the Popular Mobilization Forces hold a poster of Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, deputy commander of the Popular Mobilization Forces and General Qassem Soleimani, head of Iran's Quds force during a rally to commemorate the anniversary of the killing of Soleimani and al-Muhandis in a U.S. drone strike in Basra, Iraq, Friday, Jan. 8, 2021.

Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — The U.S. Treasury on Friday imposed sanctions on a prominent Iraqi politician and security official, accusing him of serious human rights abuses.

The Treasury said Fali al-Fayyadh stands accused of "directing and supervising the killing of peaceful Iraqi demonstrators" in 2019 and must be held account-

able. He is the chairman of the Popular Mobilization Forces, an umbrella of mostly Shiite militias, including powerful Iran-backed groups, and served as national security advisor. The umbrella group was formed in 2014 to counter the Islamic State group, following a fatwa from Iraq's top Shiite cleric Ali al-Sistani. There was no immediate comment from al-Fayyadh. The growing influence of the Shiite group over Iraqi state affairs — in particular its Iran-backed elements — has alarmed U.S. officials.

Al-Fayyadh was targeted under the Magnitsky Act, passed by Congress in 2012 initially in response to the death of Russian lawyer Sergei Magnitsky, who died in prison after exposing a tax fraud scheme involving Russian officials. The law named after him was ex-

panded and allows the U.S. to target any foreigner accused of human rights violations and corruption.

Anti-government protesters in Iraq have long accused Iran-linked militias of targeting them during mass demonstrations that began in October 2019, when thousands rallied against corruption, unemployment, poor public services and other grievances. More than 500 people were killed during the months-long protests, many of them demonstrators shot by Iraqi security forces.

The protests have since died down, due to the violent crackdown, kidnappings and targeted assassinations of activists, and also due to the coronavirus lockdowns.

Al-Fayyadh has been the head of the Shiite militias during this time and contin-

ues to hold the post. Though Iran-backed groups functioning under the umbrella stand accused by activists and the U.S., no official investigation has ever been conducted to identify the perpetrators of the killings of protesters.

It is also unclear how much influence al-Fayyadh had over the operations of individual militia groups, leading some Iraqi officials to speculate over the political implications of the latest sanctions.

Al-Fayyadh deputy, powerful militia leader Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, was considered far more influential over the activities of Iran-backed groups in Iraq. Al-Muhandis was killed in a Washington-directed drone strike last year targeting the top Iranian general Qassim Soleimani outside Baghdad airport. □

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Mexico leader condemns Twitter, Facebook for blocking Trump

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Mexico's president on Thursday condemned the decision by social media platforms to block the accounts of U.S. President Donald Trump.

President Andrés Manuel López Obrador at the same time declined to condemn the assault by Trump supporters on the U.S. Capitol on Wednesday, citing his policy of not interfering in other countries' affairs. He said only that he regretted the loss of lives.

But López Obrador, who is seen as friendly to Trump, was quick to criticize what he called the censorship of the U.S. president.

"I don't like anybody being censored or taking away from the the right to post a message on Twitter or

Face(book). I don't agree with that, I don't accept that," López Obrador said.

"How can you censor someone: 'Let's see, I, as the judge of the Holy Inquisition, will punish you because I think what you're saying is harmful,'" López Obrador said in an extensive, unprompted discourse on the subject. "Where is the law, where is the regulation, what are the norms? This is an issue of government, this is not an issue for private companies."

Presidential spokesman Jesús Ramírez doubled down later in the day, writing in his Twitter account that "Facebook's decision to silence the current leader of the United States calls for a debate on freedom of expression, the free ex-



Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador gives his regularly scheduled morning press conference known as "La Mañanera" at the National Palace in Mexico City, Friday, Dec. 18, 2020.

Associated Press

change of information on the web, democracy and

the role of the companies that administer (social) net-

works."

Facebook and Instagram said Thursday that they will bar Trump from posting at least until the inauguration of President-elect Joe Biden. Twitter imposed a 12-hour lockdown of Trump's account, and the president used his restored access to post a video Thursday.

López Obrador also said he was not planning to attend Biden's inauguration. Earlier, he refrained from congratulating Biden on his election victory until after the Electoral College vote in mid-December. The Mexican leader's only trip abroad so far in his presidency was to visit Trump in Washington in July to celebrate the implementation of the Mexico-U.S.-Canada trade agreement. □

9 killed in attack on wake in Mexico's Guanajuato state

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Nine people were killed and one wounded when gunmen opened fire at a wake the central Mexican state of Guanajuato, officials said. Public safety officials in the city of Celaya said in a statement the gunmen arrived late Thursday night and opened fire on a group of people. The victims were standing outside a home in a low-income neighborhood where a wake was being held for a young man who himself had been gunned down nearby a couple of days before. Images from the scene showed bodies strewn in the street.

Guanajuato-based security analyst David Saucedo

said the attack appears to have been carried out by the Jalisco New Generation Cartel against the dead man's family. The killers apparently believed they were linked to the rival Santa Rosa de Lima gang, even though many may not have been.

"At that wake, a lot of innocent people died," Saucedo said.

Guanajuato is at the center of the bloody turf war between drug cartels acting through local gangs. State authorities did not immediately confirm which gang was responsible for the killings. Thousands have been killed in Guanajuato since Santa Rosa de Lima, a local gang, began a turf war

to fight off a takeover by the insurgent Jalisco cartel in 2017.

Authorities captured the leader of the Santa Rosa de Lima gang in August, but the violence has continued. Saucedo said that the Sinaloa cartel has apparently entered into a kind of proxy war to prevent a Jalisco victory in the state, sending arms, money and hired killers to support Santa Rosa de Lima and other local gangs. That same kind of proxy war made the border city of Ciudad Juárez a killing ground in the years around 2010.

The Santa Rosa gang grew up in a farming hamlet of the same name by stealing fuel from government pipe-



Bloodstains and bullet holes mark the front of a home, after gunmen opened fire the previous night on mourners at a wake outside, on the outskirts of Celaya, Guanajuato state, Mexico, Friday, Jan. 8, 2021.

Associated Press

lines and refineries and robbing freight from trains. But after authorities stepped up security around trains

and pipelines over the last two years, the gang turned to extortion and kidnapping. □

LOCAL



Covid-19 update Aruba

ORANJESTAD – Almost a year after the 1st case of Covid-19 hit the island and was completely shut down for 3.5 months, Aruba's tourism and economy is picking up bit by bit. Borders had been reopened for US Travelers, Europeans, and as per December 1st, 2020 we welcomed back our visitors of Latin America, South America and the rest of the Caribbean with the exception of Venezuela. Rules and protocols are being reviewed and evaluated on a daily basis and adapted as per current situation by a crisis team, in order to protect each and every one visiting and inhabiting our island.

There are currently (January 8th, closing of this edition) 538 active Covid cases on the island. 508 residents and 30 non-residents. There are 10 persons hospitalized of which 7 of them are in the Intensive care unit. A total of 71.418 persons have been tested of which 43.270 were tested at the airport. 50 persons lost the battle against Covid-19. Due to the amount of in-

crease in cases these last days the Government of Aruba took some additional measurements in order to stop the spread as quickly as possible.

These are the decisions taken by the Government of Aruba up till today:

For Restaurants:
Max 4 per table.
No live musicians/entertainment.
No musical events that are intended to attract customers.
Background (non-live) music only in restaurants.
No dancing.

Boats on sea:
Maximum 4 persons on boats/yachts.
Avoid social events on boats.

Gathering Ban:
Maximum 2 persons together in public areas.

Shopping:
Only 1 person per family inside stores/supermarkets.

Masks required inside*.
(*Remember - Resort Elevators & hallways are inside areas)
Use masks when 1.5 meter is not possible.

Social events
Max 10 inside (if distance is possible) and 25 outside (if distance is possible).
No contact sports.
No permits for public events will be granted.
Police can stop event if there is disorder.
New legal basis for fines is introduced which allows police to act more effectively against violations.

Still Operative
- Curfew (TDQ) from 11pm to 5am.

Business closing time is between 10pm and 6am.
Hotels and lodgings are exempted from the closing time, BUT only to serve their registered guests between 10pm and 6am.
Casinos are not part of the exemption and must close at 10pm.

- Ban on beaches and parking from 7pm to 5am.
(Licensed restaurants on the beach can operate until 10pm - customers to be seated at tables at all times, as per rules).
- Businesses are required to have a compliance officer.
- Business owners are asked to take responsibility for enforcement of rules.

Advice for travelers
Prior to travel, visitors should download the Aruba Department of Public Health's Aruba Health App. A mobile resource for information on COVID-19 health procedures in Aruba, facilitation of the airport health screening, and faster results for Molecular PCR COVID-19 tests taken in Aruba.

Also as of November 1, 2020 a flat premium of \$30 is applicable for new insurance policies for travelers over 14 years old. More information on travel and health requirements can be found on www.aruba.com. □

Aruba Airport Authority: a recovery of 36% of departing passengers in December 2020: Revenue Generating Passenger amounts increased compared to November 2020

ORANJESTAD — In December 38,242 Revenue Generating Passengers (RGPs) travelled out of the Queen Beatrix International Airport (AUA Airport) to the various markets. This was 22% more than November 2020. In December 29,019 passengers (pax) travelled to the US, 420 to Canada, 3,825 pax to Europe, 1,471 pax to the Netherlands Antilles and a total of 3,507 pax

travelled to Latin America, including one humanitarian flight to Venezuela with 101 pax.

The figures for December 2020 are 37% less than what was forecasted for this month and compared to 2019 AUA Airport has recovered 36% during December versus the same month 2019. An average outbound load factor (LF) (number

of seats of the total seats on board an aircraft that are occupied when departing from AUA Airport) for the US Market of 40% (excluding de-densification of aircraft) was reported during the period of December 1 through 31, 2020, while the LF for the European market was 45%.

During December, AUA Airport averaged 21 flights per day, down from about 37 daily flights from the same month last year. For 2020 a total of 430,496 RGPs were processed at Aruba Airport which signifies a recovery of 34% of the total traffic that departed and was processed in 2019.

For 2021, based on the latest insights that AUA Airport has from its stakeholders such as the airlines, it is expected that an approximate amount of 582,000 departing passengers will be handled which is a recovery of 46% of the traffic that was generated in 2019. "We continue to recover traffic slowly but surely in the coming winter season months which is the busiest season for AUA Airport. We hope to continue this recovery of our airlift in this manner in 2021. The load factors have yet to further improve, and we hope that the planned air service by our airline partners will continue accordingly for the remainder of the winter season 2021," said Aruba Airport Authority N.V. CEO Mr. Joost Meijs. □



ARUBA AIRPORT COVID-19 ENTRY REQUIREMENTS EXEMPTION LIST Version 8 (effective 21 December 2020)

Online ED Card Registration	COVID-19 PCR Test	COVID-19 Insurance	Face Mask
Aircraft crew members	Aircraft crew members ⁽²⁾	Aircraft crew members	Children aged 14 and under ⁽⁷⁾
Air ambulance patients ⁽¹⁾	Residents of Aruba and Bonaire, when travelling between these islands	Residents of Aruba, Curacao and Bonaire	Persons with medical reason not to wear it
Direct transit passengers ⁽²⁾	Children aged 14 and under	Children aged 14 and under will have to pay a one-time fee	
	Air ambulance patients ⁽¹⁾	Diplomatic Officers ⁽⁵⁾	
	Direct transit passengers ⁽²⁾	Dutch Military Personnel ⁽⁶⁾	
	Same day transfer passengers ⁽⁴⁾	Air ambulance patients ⁽¹⁾	
		Direct transit passengers ⁽²⁾	
		Same day transfer passengers ⁽⁴⁾	

(1) This applies only to patients who will have to travel to Aruba in an emergency situation; providing they are medically insured and are being transported directly to a medical facility upon arrival. This does not apply to the companion(s) of the patient.

(2) Passenger who, after a short stop, continues his/her journey on the same aircraft on a flight having the same flight number as the flight on which he/she arrived.

(3) Crew members that show symptoms during the health screening at arrival, will have to be tested and comply with the one-day quarantine. Note: A crew member is a person assigned by, and in service of, an aircraft operator to duty on an aircraft during a flight duty period (including deadheading crew).

(4) Passengers who are departing Aruba on the same calendar day of arrival (departing either by air or sea).

(5) Visitors who hold a diplomat status and are in that capacity visiting Aruba for their work are exempt to purchase an insurance.

(6) He/she must be an active member of the Dutch Military based in Aruba, and the exemption includes his/her spouse and children.

(7) Provided they have no symptoms that may indicate COVID-19.

Advanced insurance protection in case you test positive for COVID-19 during your stay in Aruba:

About the obligatory Aruba Visitors insurance

Why is it necessary?

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the island of Aruba must ensure that all visitors are properly insured and that local medical- and non-medical providers are not left with unpaid bills. Subject to some sub limits and overall limit of US\$75,000, a visitor who tests positive for COVID-19 in Aruba, will have very few, if any, out-of-pocket expenses. The medical- and non-medical providers are paid directly by the locally licensed insurers, giving you a peace of mind in case you test positive for COVID-19 in Aruba.

What does it cover?

HOSPITAL COSTS- Hospitalization expenses to treat severe COVID-19 symptoms, including specialist fees, diagnostic x-rays, lab expenses and nursing costs.

INTENSIVE CARE UNIT COSTS - Intensive Care Unit charges for treatment of a critical ailment

caused by COVID-19.

TRANSPORTATION- Costs of specialized transportation of a Covid-19 infected person up to an aggregate sublimit of \$350.

DOCTOR CONSULTS- Costs of doctor consults up to an aggregate sublimit of \$500.

ISOLATION EXPENSES- Maximum sublimit of \$125 per day, max. 14 days, in case of a positive Covid-19 test result. Preventive government mandated quarantines for fellow travelers and those who tested negative are NOT COVERED.

COVID-19 TEST- Max. 4 medically necessary Covid-19 tests as out-patient with a sublimit of \$75. Tests are only covered with referral from the Aruba Government Health Department (DVG). The mandatory first test upon arrival in Aruba is excluded.

MAXIMUM LIMIT- The overall maximum limit for all benefits together is \$75,000.

How much does it cost?

Ages 15 - 75

Effective 1 November 2020, a flat premium of \$30 is being charged for stays not exceeding 180 days.

Ages 0 -14

Children up to & including age 14 are charged a flat premium of \$10 for stays not exceeding 180 days.

Ages 76+

Effective 1 November 2020, a flat premium of \$30 is being charged for stays not exceeding 180 days.

The premium is non-refundable, unless you've made a duplicate purchase or if you cancelled your trip to Aruba. The premium must be paid every time you re-enter Aruba. □

Telecommunication company Setar and the Department of Public Health (DVG) introduce: An innovative solution: the Aruba Health App



ORANJESTAD — Since mid-April, Setar; together with DVG (Department of Public Health) and the Aruban government, have begun the first part of the 'DVG Health Check App', which was created for the registration and management of people in quarantine. The goal of the DVG's Health Check App is to have a better view of the registered coronavirus cases on the island and to closely follow the developments of those in quarantine, thus combating the virus on Aruba.

The second part of the project, which commenced in June, is called 'Aruba Health App' and is a collaboration between Setar, DVG, the Horacio Oduber hospital (HOH), Aruba Tourism Authority (A.T.A) and Futura. The app focuses on the tourists who are visiting the island. The app was launched on the 4th of July and is now available on Google and Apple app stores for tourists to download before they travel to Aruba.

The Aruba Health App offers tourists different information regarding the virus, from the time they arrive and throughout their stay in Aruba. For example, if a tourist did their COVID-19 testing in Aruba, they would receive their results on the app within 24 hours. If the test comes out positive, the person will automatically be added to DVG's quarantine administration system, so that they are able to monitor and follow close developments of the person's case and health.

Setar together with their partners are working on upcoming developments of the app for the future. The goal of the app is to continue growing, sustaining and managing the health of tourists and locals on Aruba. Setar; as our national telecommunication company, is proud to be a part of innovative solutions that will help fight and control the transmission of the corona virus on Aruba. □

Aruba Health & Happiness Code' Gold Certification to protect visitors' travel experience



ORANJESTAD — Back in May of 2020, the Aruba Tourism Authority (A.T.A) and the Department of Public Health announced the 'Aruba Health & Happiness Code', a stringent cleaning and hygiene certification program that is mandatory for all tourism related businesses across the country.

"As we prepared to reopen our borders, it was critical to evolve and innovate as a tourism destination to protect our local community and future travelers once they reach our shores," said Danguillaume Oduber, Minister of Tourism, Public Health and Sport of Aruba. "We want all visitors to feel

reassured in traveling to our One happy island, knowing we worked together as a nation to implement the highest health and safety protocols through every step of their journey." The 'Aruba Health & Happiness Code' certification provides assurance that each business has taken every measure to offer a safe environment for employees and guests. The certification seal of approval will be displayed prominently on all tourism related businesses, and the certified businesses will also be found on the Department of Public Health website. Aruba's health and safety protocols will provide

a seamlessly secure and clean experience for visitors at every touchpoint, upon arrival in Aruba. The Aruba Airport Authority has worked with the Department of Public Health and followed World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines to implement numerous measures such as screening, temperature checks, on-site medical professionals, social distance markers and additional shields and safeguards, mandatory PPE training for all staff, and more.

As visitors depart the airport, they will find the 'Aruba Health & Happiness Code' certification seal of approval on taxis/transport and on all businesses that fall into the sectors of accommodations, food and beverage, restaurants and bars, casinos, retail shops, and tour operators. The Aruba Hotel & Tourism Association has distributed their "Best Practices" guide to hotels which elevates the existing cleaning protocols to new norms for all areas including luggage handling, elevator safety,

housekeeping guidelines, food & beverage service, casinos and more. The two pillars of the best practices guide are physical distancing and sanitation, based on the Department of Public Health of Aruba and WHO guidelines. Visitors can expect such measures as plexiglass barriers at desks, digital keys and contactless check-in, thorough disinfecting of all public spaces and rooms, and more. These new protocols to safeguard visitors and locals also extend to national parks and tourism attractions. Aruba's renowned Arikok National Park will adhere to the certification guidelines and is creating digital experiences to help

reinforce social distancing including virtual guided tours of the park. For the first time ever, the Park will permanently ban ATVs (starting June 1) and UTVs (starting October 31) from protected areas. This will help preserve nature and limit how many people can access the park, ultimately providing a more intimate experience for visitors. In order to receive visitors, all businesses must adhere to the new protocols and receive on-site inspection and approval from the Department of Inspection and Hygiene to be awarded with the Aruba Health & Happiness Code gold certification seal. For more information visit www.aruba.com. □



We honor our Goodwill Ambassadors



EAGLE BEACH — Recently, Kimberley Richardson of the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure to honor Aruba's loyal and friendly visitors as Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba. The symbolic Goodwill Ambassador certificate is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism, as a token of appreciation to the guests who visit Aruba 20 years and more consecutively.

The honorees were couple Thomas & Deborah DeSanti.

This couple stated that they love the island very much, especially for its year-round sunny weather, nice sandy beaches and picturesque sunsets, delicious variety of foods, and Aruba's warm and friendly people.

Richardson together with the representatives of the Divi Aruba All-Inclusive presented the certificate to the honorees, handed over some presents and also thanked them for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination and as their home-away-from-home. □

New campaign, and logo, for GM in a bid to electrify image

By TOM KRISHER

AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) — General Motors is changing its corporate logo and launching an electric vehicle marketing campaign to reshape its image as clean vehicle company, rather than a builder of gas-powered pickups and SUVs.

The 112-year-old Detroit automaker has promised to roll out 30 new battery-powered vehicles globally by the end of 2025 and said Friday that the new campaign will highlight its progressive vision for the future.

GM said the industry has reached a history-changing inflection point for mass adoption of electric vehicles.

The campaign comes as stock market investors are enthralled with companies that make electric vehicles. Shares of global EV leader Tesla Inc. have skyrocketed more than 800% in the past year, and the company's market value has passed \$800 billion. GM's shares are only up slightly in the past year and its value is around \$61 billion.

Shares of GM were down 1.6% to \$42.61 in Friday afternoon trading. GM is scrapping its old square blue logo and replacing it with a lower case gm surrounded by rounded corners. The company says it's the biggest change to its logo since 1964. The 'm' in the logo is underlined to look more like an electrical plug.

"We felt it was just such a transformative moment that this is the time



This image provided by General Motors shows the new company logo.

Associated Press

that we would change again," said Deborah Wahl, GM global chief marketing officer. "Our message here is that we believe there should be an EV for everyone."

GM is hoping the "Everybody In" campaign prepares buyers for a new era of vehicle propulsion.

Wahl said the marketing campaign will be "very significant," but she wouldn't say how much money would be spent or where it will show

up. "You will see it in many places throughout the year," she said Friday. She said the campaign will start in the United States but eventually will become global. It will not be in brand ads for vehicles, Wahl said.

Late last year, GM said it was nearing a battery chemistry breakthrough that will make electric vehicles as affordable as those with internal combustion engines in less

than five years. Some will be able to go up to 450 miles per charge and from zero to 60 mph (97 kilometers per hour) in as quickly as three seconds.

The company has promised to spend \$27 billion on battery vehicles through 2025.

The new logo will go wherever GM now has a logo, including websites and buildings, Wahl said.

The company stopped putting the logo on car bodies about a decade ago as it started to emphasize individual brands. But GM says the new logo eventually will replace the old one on window glass and some other parts.

The marketing campaign will feature celebrities including Malcom Gladwell, author of "The Tipping Point."

A campaign of "Everyone In" conflicts a bit with GM's announced plans for electric vehicles such as a GMC Hummer pickup and Cadillac Lyriq SUV, both higher-priced vehicles. But Wahl said lower priced vehicles are among the 30 new electric vehicles that are coming.

GM officials have said previously that they will have a small electric SUV that will cost less than \$30,000 within five years.

The campaign will run ahead of current electric vehicle sales trends in the U.S. Last year automakers sold just over 260,000 fully electric vehicles. Although sales were up nearly 10% over 2019, electric vehicles still were less than 2% of new

Bitcoin crosses \$40K mark, doubling in less than a month

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) —

First it went through \$20,000. Then 10 days later, it broke through \$25,000, and then, with barely taking a breath, it crossed \$30,000. Now only a few days into 2021, the price of bitcoin has crossed \$40,000.

Nothing's new with the digital currency in the month since it crossed \$20,000 — there's been no major change in how it can be used. Although some investors are now using the notoriously volatile currency as a "store of value," which is traditionally a title saved for safe haven investments like gold and other precious metals.

"Will you be able to buy a cup of coffee with bitcoin? Probably not with the cur-

rent version of Bitcoin. It's largely become a store of value," said Mike Venuto, a co-portfolio manager of the Amplify Transformational Data Sharing ETF, a \$391 million exchanged-traded fund that focuses on blockchain technologies and companies that deal with cryptocurrencies.

Media attention to its rise has only added fuel to the rally. But investors in digital currencies and companies that trade or "mine" them are warning people to be skeptical of Bitcoin's recent rise and to be braced for a lot of volatility.

It's been a wild ride for bitcoin the last three years. The digital currency made its big Wall Street debut in December 2017, when the

major futures exchanges rolled out bitcoin futures. The attention drove Bitcoin to roughly \$19,300, a then-unheard of price for the currency.

Then it all evaporated. The currency's value plunged sharply in 2018, and by December of that year Bitcoin was worth less than \$4,000 a coin. Up until this most recent rally which started in October, Bitcoin generally floated between \$5,000 and \$10,000.

While in the last two years companies have embraced the technology that underlies digital currencies like Bitcoin, a concept known as the blockchain, the actual uses for Bitcoin have not really changed since its rally three years



In this Wednesday, Aug. 20, 2014 file photo, Jon Rumion, background left, talks with Michael Cargill at Central Texas Gun Works in Austin, Texas.

Associated Press

ago. It's still largely used by those distrustful of the banking system, criminals seeking to launder money, and for the most part, as a store of value.

In fact, other investments typically used as safe havens during uncertain times — notable precious metals — have been trading at near record highs as well. □

Study suggests Pfizer vaccine works against virus variant

By LAURAN NEERGAARD
AP Medical Writer

New research suggests Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine can protect against a mutation found in the two more-contagious variants of the coronavirus that have erupted in Britain and South Africa.

The study was preliminary and did not look at the two other major vaccines being used in the West — Moderna's and AstraZeneca's. But it was reassuring, given questions of whether the virus could mutate to defeat the shots on which the world has pinned its hopes. "There's no reason to think the vaccines won't work just as well on these strains," said Dr. Frederic Bushman of the University of Pennsylvania, who tracks how the virus mutates.

The mutated version circulating in Britain has also been detected in the U.S. and numerous other countries.

That and the variant seen in South Africa are causing global concern because they appear to spread more easily — although how much more isn't yet known.



Syringes containing the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine sit in a tray in a vaccination room at St. Joseph Hospital in Orange, Calif., Thursday, Jan. 7, 2021.

Associated Press

Bushman, who wasn't involved with the Pfizer study, cautioned that it tested just one vaccine against one worrisome mutation. But the Moderna and AstraZeneca vaccines are undergoing similar testing, and he said he expects similar findings. That's because all the vaccines so far are prompting recipients' bodies to make

antibodies against multiple spots on the spike protein that coats the virus.

"A mutation will change one little place, but it's not going to disrupt binding to all of them," Bushman explained.

While scientists did not expect that a single mutation would completely upend efforts to stop the pan-

demic, it is still an important area of study because the coronavirus, like all viruses, constantly evolves. This study marks just the beginning of continual monitoring to make sure that all the vaccines being rolled out around the world continue to work.

The study looked at one modification to the spike

protein that both variants share, called N501Y, that is believed responsible for the easier transmission. Pfizer and researchers from the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston conducted laboratory tests to see if that mutation could thwart the vaccine.

They used blood samples from 20 people who received the vaccine, made by Pfizer and its German partner BioNTech, during a large trial of the shots. Antibodies from those recipients fended off the virus in lab dishes, according to the study, posted late Thursday on an online site for researchers.

The findings have not yet been reviewed by outside experts, a key step for medical research.

But "it was a very reassuring finding that at least this mutation, which was one of the ones people are most concerned about, does not seem to be a problem" for the vaccine, said Pfizer chief scientific officer Dr. Philip Dormitzer.

Viruses constantly undergo minor changes as they spread from person to person. □

One-third of America's rivers have changed color since 1984



In this Thursday, July 12, 2018 file photo, an algae bloom appears on the Caloosahatchee River at the W.P. Franklin Lock and Dam in Alva, Fla.

Associated Press

By SETH BORENSTEIN

America's rivers are changing color — and people are behind many of the shifts, a new study said.

One-third of the tens of thousands of mile-long (two kilometer-long) river segments in the United States

have noticeably shifted color in satellite images since 1984. That includes 11,629 miles (18,715 kilometers) that became greener, or went toward the violet end of the color spectrum, according to a study in this week's journal *Geographi-*

cal Research Letters. Some river segments became more red.

Only about 5% of U.S. river mileage is considered blue — a color often equated with pristine waters by the general public. About two-thirds of American rivers are yellow, which signals they have lots of soil in them.

But 28% of the rivers are green, which often indicates they are choked with algae. And researchers found 2% of U.S. rivers over the years shifted from dominantly yellow to distinctly green.

"If things are becoming more green, that's a problem," said study lead author John Gardner, a University of Pittsburgh geology and environmental sciences professor. Although some green tint to rivers can be normal, Gardener said, it often means large algae

blooms that cause oxygen loss and can produce toxins.

The chief causes of color changes are farm fertilizer run-off, dams, efforts to fight soil erosion and man-made climate change, which increases water temperature and rain-related run-off, the study authors said. "We change our rivers a lot. A lot of that has to do with human activity," said study co-author Tamlin Pavelsky, a professor of global hydrology at the University of North Carolina. For example, Pavelsky said, the green at times in the Ohio River indicates a bad algae problem from farm runoff while rivers that are getting less yellow demonstrate the success of regulations to prevent soil erosion.

The study looked at more than 230,000 NASA satellite

images over 35 years, focusing on rivers and reservoirs. The study found much of the shift to greener rivers happened in the North and West, while the yellowing occurred more in the East and around the Mississippi River. It also found some rivers change colors naturally with the seasons.

Outside experts praised the study, saying while hard-to-understand measurements have shown problems with American rivers, this illustrates the situation simply. The study "is super cool and a bit mind-blowing (yet intuitive)," Martin Doyle, head of water programs at Duke University, wrote in an email. "It shows how most every aspect of our planet is being affected by humans, now including the basic color of our water. That's pretty profound if you think about it." □

Simon & Schuster drops book by Missouri Sen. Josh Hawley

NEW YORK (AP) — A planned book by Sen. Josh Hawley, who objected to President-elect Joe Biden's win and backed baseless claims that the election was stolen, has been canceled by its publisher in the wake of the insurrection at the U.S. Capitol by a mob of pro-Trump supporters, a decision the Missouri Re-

publican called "Orwellian" and vowed to fight in court. In a statement Thursday, Simon & Schuster announced that "After witnessing the disturbing, deadly insurrection that took place on Wednesday in Washington, D.C., Simon & Schuster has decided to cancel publication of Senator Josh Hawley's forthcoming book, 'The Tyranny of Big Tech.'"

"We did not come to this decision lightly," the publisher added. "As a publisher it will always be our mission to amplify a variety of voices and viewpoints: at the same time we take seriously our larger public



Sen. Josh Hawley, R-Mo., asks questions during a Senate Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs Committee hearing to discuss election security and the 2020 election process on Wednesday, Dec. 16, 2020, on Capitol Hill in Washington.

Associated Press

responsibility as citizens, and cannot support Senator Hawley after his role in what became a dangerous threat to our democ-

racy and freedom." □

Classifieds

For Sale: Casa del Mar

Presidential unit at Casa Del Mar for week 1, room 1317. 2 bedroom, 2 bath, full kitchen, dining room, pool and fitness center. Asking \$16,000. Call USA, 845-239-2918 or email garyhudak684@comcast.net

For Sale: Casa Del Mar

Presidential unit at Casa Del Mar for week 2, room 1511. 2 bedroom, 2 bath, full kitchen, dining room, pool and fitness center. Asking \$16,000. Call USA, 845-239-2918 or email garyhudak684@comcast.net.

For Sale: Barcelo

All Inclusive. Prime week, studio deluxe unit. Sleeps 2. Cost of food and liquor package extra. Cost of ownership \$12,000. Call USA 845-239-2918 or email garyhudak684@comcast.net.

213673

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week 8/1113; 8/1409
(17k/wk.);
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Plants etc..INFO 741-5640

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

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6			8	5	9			4
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Difficulty Level ★★★★★

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Solution on Page 14



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Caribbean Speed Printers N.V.
Aruba Bank N.V. Acc. #332668
Caribbean Mercantile Bank N.V.
Acc. #23951903
RBC Royal Bank Acc. #1330772

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HEALTH

DOCTOR ON DUTY

Oranjestad

Hospital 7:00 pm / 10:00pm
Tel. 527 4000

San Nicolas

Imsan 24 hours
Tel. 524 8833

PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad:

Kibrahacha Tel. 583 4908

San Nicolas:

Centro Medico Tel. 584 5794

OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850
Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002
Urgent Care 586 0448
Walk-In Doctor's Clinic
+297 588 0539

EMERGENCY

Police	100
Oranjestad	527 3140
Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Tas	587 5900
Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

TRAVEL INFO

Aruba Airport	524 2424
American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

AID FOUNDATIONS

FAVI- Visually Impaired
Tel. 582 5051

Alcoholics Anonymous
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Q&A: Javicia Leslie takes on Batwoman role to empower others

By JONATHAN LANDRUM Jr.
LOS ANGELES (AP) —

When Javicia Leslie moved to Los Angeles, she frequently rode down the popular Sunset Boulevard to view the row of erected TV and film billboards for inspiration. As an aspiring actor, she often parked underneath her favorite ones to study before an audition.

For years, Leslie made this her routine in hopes of one day seeing her image on full display in Hollywood. Her dreams ultimately became reality when the 33-year-old actor — who starred on CBS's "God Friended Me" and Carl Weber's "The Family Business" on BET+ — recently saw a billboard of herself donning the black-and-red Batwoman suit.

Leslie will star as the caped crusader on CW's "Batwoman," which premieres its second season on Jan. 17. She succeeds Ruby Rose, becoming the franchise's first Black actress to portray the superhero, and will be featured as an avowed LGBTQ central character.

In "Batwoman," Leslie plays the role of Ryan Wilder, who spent years as a drug runner while dodging Gotham police. Her character has lethal hand-combat skills but is viewed as a kind-hearted person who lives in a van with a plant.

In a recent interview, Leslie spoke to The Associated Press about carrying the mantle as the new Batwoman, the importance of the character being a lesbian and having a conversation with her mother about her sexual orienta-



This image provided by The CW shows Javicia Leslie in a scene from "Batwoman."

Associated Press

tion. Answers have been edited for length and clarity.

AP: What compelled you to study for your roles under billboards?

Leslie: I needed that visual to remind myself of what the end goal was and what I really wanted. It just motivated me. It was fun. Sometimes, I'd study until I fell asleep. Like I had to wake up and drive back home.

AP: So this is something you manifested?

Leslie: I feel like everything I'm living right now, I've spoken into existence. From the very beginning to the detail. Even with Batwoman, I did an interview in May and I was asked what role I wanted to do next, and I said, "I want to play a superhero." ... The following month, I got the audition. I didn't even know they were

looking to cast a new Batwoman. So, I truly believe in manifestation.

AP: What does being DC's first Black female lead superhero mean to you?

Leslie: You know, I always just remind myself that my purpose isn't for me. My purpose is to empower other people. God brought me here for a reason. He put me in this position for a reason. With that, it's nothing to fear because I know this will empower someone to see a Black female superhero. You don't get to see it often. It's so epic. I grew up on Batman and Catwoman and the Joker and Penguin. Now, to see blackness in that, I think it's very inclusive. Very empowering.

AP: What's the importance of this character to be a lesbian?

Leslie: It's important to have

representation in general. Fans of DC represent everyone, whether it's about race, whether it's LGBTQ. I think what I love so much about my show is that every character is really a great representation of everything.

AP: Before telling your mom about landing the Batwoman role, you informed her about your sexual orientation as a bisexual. How was that convo?

Leslie: I never had a fear of talking to my mom about anything. It's to the point where I don't have to talk about a lot of things. She already gets it. She already knows. So when we had a conversation, she was like "I am your mother. There's nothing you can tell me that I didn't already know." My mom, that's my best friend. She's very supportive.

AP: How did your character Ryan endure being homeless?

Leslie: That may seem like the bottom to some people, but that was the top of what she's been through. To even have her own van and take care of herself, that meant something to her. She comes from foster care and abusive foster homes and people not caring for her. The one person that cared about her was murdered in front of her. I think what may seem like nothing to someone else is a lot to her. She holds onto it. She cherishes it.

AP: How did your character's circumstances mold them?

Leslie: I think that if there is anything that roots the darkness in her, it's probably a little bit of revenge. The vengeance she has for the ones that killed her mother. That is enough. How can you truly fight for what's good if you can't forgive? How can you truly be on the right side if vengeance is what empowers you?

AP: What do you want people to take away from your career so far?

Leslie: There's so many times where I could have said "This is hard" and walked away. But you must keep going. One of the things I live by is that if you follow your passion, you'll find your purpose. I think God puts passions in us for a reason. ... You must find your purpose in anything you want and speak it into existence. Then you need to have the work ethic to support it. □

Avenatti's trial over Stormy Daniels book funds set for 2022



In this April 16, 2018, file photo, adult film actress Stormy Daniels, left, stands with her then lawyer, Michael Avenatti, during a press conference outside federal court in New York.

Associated Press

By LARRY NEUMEISTER
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A trial for Michael Avenatti to face charges that he cheated ex-client Stormy Daniels out of proceeds from her book was delayed Friday until next year.

U.S. District Judge Jesse M. Furman in Manhattan said a Jan. 10, 2022, date will be firm for the once high-flying California lawyer who sparred with President Don-

ald Trump in online postings while Avenatti represented the stripper and porn star. In 2018, Avenatti regularly appeared on cable news programs to attack Trump after suing him over a \$130,000 payoff Daniels received shortly before the 2016 presidential election to silence her about claims of a tryst with Trump a decade earlier. Trump has denied any affair. Avenatti has pleaded not

guilty to all charges. □

SOLUTION SUDOKU

Difficulty Level: 1/09

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Spurs stop Lakers' 4-game streak, win 2nd straight in LA

LOS ANGELES (AP) — LaMarcus Aldridge scored a season-high 28 points and the San Antonio Spurs beat the NBA champion Los Angeles Lakers 118-109 on Thursday.

Two nights after topping the Clippers to snap a four-game losing streak, the Spurs picked up another win at Staples Center.

Demar DeRozan added 19 points and eight assists for San Antonio. The Spurs were 16 of 35 on 3-pointers after making 20 from beyond the arc against the Clippers.

LeBron James scored 27 points and Anthony Davis added 23 points and 10 rebounds for the Lakers, who had their four-game winning streak snapped.

San Antonio scored the first nine points and never trailed.

MAVERICKS 124, NUGGETS 117, OT

DENVER (AP) — Luka Dončić came within one rebound of his second straight triple-double, finishing with 38 points and 13 assists to lead Dallas over Denver in overtime.

Dončić sat out Sunday's loss to Chicago and responded with his first triple-double of the season against Houston on Monday. He followed



San Antonio Spurs forward LaMarcus Aldridge, left, defends against Los Angeles Lakers guard Talen Horton-Tucker during the second quarter of an NBA basketball game Thursday, Jan. 7, 2021, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

that up with a season high in points.

Nikola Jokić scored 20 of his 38 points after halftime and grabbed 11 rebounds for the Nuggets. Jamal Murray added 21 points and nine assists.

Josh Richardson scored 14 points, including five straight in overtime to give the Mavericks the lead for good.

Jokić capped a 17-point fourth quarter with an 18-

foot jumper at the horn to send the game to overtime.

NETS 122, 76ERS 109

NEW YORK (AP) — Joe Harris had a season-best 28 points and Brooklyn, playing without Kyrie Irving and Kevin Durant, beat NBA-leading Philadelphia.

Without their two superstars in uniform — blue uniforms, a throwback to 30 years ago in New Jersey — the Nets jumped out quickly

and had a double-digit lead for much of the second half while winning their second straight, both without Durant.

Caris LeVert had 22 points, 10 assists and seven rebounds, and Jarrett Allen added 15 points and 11 boards for the Nets.

Irving was ruled out Thursday afternoon for personal reasons. The Nets already knew they'd be without Durant for a second con-

secutive game because of the NBA's health and safety protocols.

Joel Embiid started slowly before finishing with 20 points and 12 rebounds for the Sixers (7-2), who beat Washington on Wednesday. Ben Simmons was limited to 11 points.

TRAIL BLAZERS 135, TIMBERWOLVES 117

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Damian Lillard had 39 points, including seven 3-pointers, and Portland handed Minnesota its sixth straight loss. CJ McCollum added 20 points for the Trail Blazers, who led by 33 in the second half. Jusuf Nurkić had 17 points and seven rebounds before Portland rested its starters in the fourth quarter. D'Angelo Russell and Anthony Edwards each scored 26 points for the Timberwolves (2-6), who continue to struggle without Karl-Anthony Towns as he recovers from a dislocated left wrist. He's missed six games, coinciding with Minnesota's losing streak.

CAVALIERS 94, GRIZZLIES 90

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — Andre Drummond had 22 points and 15 rebounds, and Larry Nance Jr. added 18 points on 7-for-7 shooting from the field to lead Cleveland past Memphis. □

Plenty of overhead in this market: Betting on drone races

By **WAYNE PARRY**

Associated Press

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. (AP) —

In the "gamblers will bet on absolutely anything" category, here's a new one: A major sports book is taking bets on aerial drone races. DraftKings said Friday it is taking bets for this weekend's championship of the Drone Racing League, in which pilots fly aerial drones in races.

Betting on the league's drone races is legal in Colorado, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Tennessee and West Virginia, with regulatory approvals pending in additional states.

"The sky is now the limit for DRL fans to get skin in the game, and we're thrilled to partner with DraftKings to transform our high-speed

race competition into the ultimate sport to bet on," Drone Racing League President Rachel Jacobson said. "The opportunity for us to elevate our engagement through all forms of gaming and gambling will only increase as mobile betting becomes more adopted across the country." The sports book and the league are hosting "pre-flight shows" Friday night on Twitter ahead of the live events, in which expert sports bettors and top drone pilots will educate fans on how to participate. Championship events begin on Saturday.

Jacobson said its races are all virtual this year, taking place in a simulation in which real-life drone physics are incorporated. But

is also hosts live drone racing in venues that have included Hard Rock Stadium in Miami Gardens, Florida; Alexandra Palace in London, and an auto-museum in Munich.

DraftKings says there's a market for this. It offered free-to-play contests on drone races last year to gauge interest in the activity, and the response was 30% higher than usual for a new sport introduced to the betting platform. There have been more than 150,000 entries into these free contests so far.

As is the case with major sports including football, baseball and basketball, gamblers will be able to make bets before the races as well as during them. DraftKings said consumer



Pilots fly their small racing drones through an obstacle course for the National Drone Racing Championship on Governors Island, a former military installation in New York Harbor, Friday, Aug. 5, 2016.

Associated Press

research has shown that drone racing fans are three times more likely to place a bet than fans of major sports leagues, and are 90% more likely to be interested in sports betting in

general than the average sports fan.

The drone league is a privately owned New York company founded in 2015. It has held events in six countries. □

Donald, Kelce unanimous AP All-Pros; Rodgers, Henry chosen

By **BARRY WILNER**
AP Pro Football Writer

Dynamic defensive star Aaron Donald and unstoppable tight end Travis Kelce were unanimous choices Friday for The Associated Press NFL All-Pro Team.

Green Bay quarterback Aaron Rodgers was selected for the third time, finishing ahead of Kansas City's Patrick Mahomes in voting from a nationwide panel of 50 media members who regularly cover the league. Last season's Super Bowl MVP shared second-team honors with Josh Allen of Buffalo.

Tennessee running back Derrick Henry, who ran for 2,027 yards to win his second consecutive rushing title, was named All-Pro for the first time after leading the AFC South champion Titans to their first division title in 12 years.

"Very consistent, very durable, very impressive," coach Mike Vrabel said of the NFL's first winner of back-to-back rushing titles since Hall of Famer LaDainian Tomlinson in 2006-07. Donald, who has helped the Los Angeles Rams to the top-ranked defense in the NFL, earned his sixth All-Pro selection. It was the third for Kansas City's record-setting Kelce.



Los Angeles Rams defensive lineman Aaron Donald sacks Seattle Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson during the second half of an NFL football game in Seattle, in this Sunday, Dec. 27, 2020, file photo.

Associated Press

"I think the best display of greatness is making people around you better," Rams coach Sean McVay said of Donald. "And that's exactly what he does, by the way he influences them every single week."

Mahomes lauded Kelce for the way he approaches his job.

"For a guy to have that much talent, work that hard and be able to learn really every single day like that, that's what makes him

so special on the field," Mahomes said.

Joining Donald and Kelce were 15 players returning to the squad, and 14 newcomers. Seattle linebacker Bobby Wagner also made his sixth squad.

"The marvelous durability that he's demonstrated for middle linebacker after all these years is just off the charts," Seahawks coach Pete Carroll said.

Kansas City receiver Tyreek Hill is now a three-time All-

Pro along with Rodgers, among the favorites to win MVP after guiding the Packers (13-3) to the top seed in the NFC.

Joining Henry as first-time choices among skill players were Buffalo wideout Stefon Diggs, who led the NFL in catches and yards receiving, and Rodgers' favorite target, Davante Adams.

"For me, honestly, I think it's just been finding different small things that I can get

better at," Adams says. "I feel like I'm a pretty complete receiver. ... It's just fine-tuning the things I do well and just figuring out a way to do them even better."

Diggs was traded by Minnesota to Buffalo in the off-season and made a huge impact as the Bills won their first AFC East title in 25 years. "For me, it was just in whatever situation I was going to be put in or chosen in, I was just going to embrace," said Diggs, who finished the regular season with 127 catches for 1,535 yards and eight touchdowns.

The Packers and Colts led all teams with four All-Pros apiece. Green Bay left tackle David Bakhtiari, who is out for the playoffs after injuring a knee in practice during the final week of the regular season, made it for the second time. Center Corey Linsley was a first-time selection.

Indianapolis has interior lineman DeForest Buckner and linebacker Darius Leonard on the defense, left guard Quenton Nelson on offense, and George Odum as the special teamer. Nelson is a three-time All-Pro, Leonard a double selection, while Buckner and Odum made it for the first time. □

Virus concerns hit Dallas, Columbus as NHL season looms



Columbus Blue Jackets players gather at center ice during NHL hockey practice Tuesday, Jan. 5, 2021, in Columbus, Ohio.

Associated Press

By The Associated Press

The NHL said Friday that six Dallas Stars players and two staff members have tested positive for COVID-19 in a development that will push

back the opener for the defending Western Conference champions by nearly a week.

The Columbus Blue Jackets also held a number of

players off the ice "out of abundance of caution" in another reminder that the pandemic will likely play havoc with the season opening next Wednesday. Dallas had been set to open the season Jan. 14 at Florida. The NHL said it was "reviewing and revising" the Stars' schedule and the opener was not likely to be any earlier than Jan. 19, currently a rematch in Tampa Bay against the Stanley Cup champion Lightning.

The Dallas players and staff are self-isolating and the team's training facilities were closed for the next several days amid contact tracing. The Blue Jackets, who open their season the same night at Nashville, said its move was "in accor-

dance with NHL COVID-19 protocols."

The NHL successfully completed its pandemic-interrupted season in twin play-off bubbles last fall without any positive tests but has warned that the upcoming season will be a challenge. The NHL has shortened the regular season to 56 games for each of its 31 teams, who will play only division foes and sometimes multiple times in a matter of a few days.

The divisions themselves were also realigned based on geography in an effort to limit travel; the North Division includes only the seven Canadian teams to avoid the complications of cross-border travel to and from the U.S.

The Canadian division cleared its final hurdle Friday when Manitoba announced it will allow the Winnipeg Jets to play home games during the pandemic. The province joined Quebec, Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia in approving the league's plan for play in Canada.

There will be no fans at Canadian arenas, at least to start the schedule. Players and team staff will be restricted to the hotel and rink when on the road, among other protocols.

"The protocols here are very good," Toronto Maple Leafs goalie Frederik Andersen said. "Of course, we're happy to do what we like to do. And I feel grateful for that." □